

the hands of ITT Tech. The least we can do is provide some very modest relief during this tough period of transition. I think passing this bill or something similar to this legislation is the least we can do.

My hope is that after we return from the recess after the election we can start talking across the aisle about more help to our student veterans and folks on the Post-9/11 GI bill. It is ironic that folks who are not veterans but recipients of Federal aid for education are in a similar situation, and they essentially would be made whole, but that is not the case with our veterans. I am not comfortable with that situation, and I suspect a lot of my colleagues are not either.

I will close this part of my remarks. I think most of us ascribe to the Golden Rule—treat other people the way you want to be treated. I have been a veteran myself. I got a great education, graduate school at the University of Delaware, but I know how I would want to be treated if I were in the shoes of these thousands of veterans who have been mistreated at the hands of ITT Tech. We need to do something about it, and I hope that when we return, we will.

#### TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

JUSTO "TITO" HERNANDEZ AND MELISSA FORBES

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, as some of my colleagues know, nearly every month for more than 1 year now, I have come to the Senate floor regularly to highlight the diverse and difficult work performed by the men and women at the Department of Homeland Security. I have been privileged to be at times in recent years the chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and today serve as the senior Democrat, the ranking member of that committee.

The Department of Homeland Security is part of the government that we have direct jurisdiction over, and it is one that I have had a great privilege to work with and have had an opportunity to oversee the operation of that Department. The Department of Homeland Security has more than 230,000 employees stationed around our country at our ports of entry, major transit hubs, and in major cities and small communities alike. Each day the Department of Homeland Security performs some of the most challenging jobs in the Federal Government. From securing radiological material to protecting our cyber networks to responding to natural disasters such as floods, fires, and tornadoes, the Department of Homeland Security employees work around-the-clock to stay ahead of threats to our communities, our homes, and our families.

I commend Secretary Jeh Johnson, Deputy Secretary Mayorkas, and their entire leadership team for their continued efforts to bring the entire depart-

ment together and make the Department of Homeland Security more than just the sum of its parts.

Last week, the 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint survey was released with some good news. The annual survey is provided to hundreds of thousands of Federal employees every year to gauge their satisfaction with their jobs and their engagement with their agency as a whole. After 6 years of declining morale numbers, the tide has begun to turn at the Department of Homeland Security. That is a good thing. Since last year, morale has increased throughout the Department by some 3 percent. I think that is probably more than any other Department in the Federal Government—over the last year, a significant one-year improvement and a better result than the Federal Government average over the same period.

Like turning an aircraft carrier, improving morale over a large Federal agency takes time. You can turn an aircraft carrier's course, but it takes a little while, and so does changing and improving the morale of a department with a quarter of a million people spread out all over the world. I believe this latest survey shows that the hard work done by Secretary Johnson and Deputy Secretary Mayorkas and their team has begun to put this ship on a better course for the future.

While more work needs to be done to improve morale at the Department of Homeland Security, this effort does not fall on Secretary Johnson alone. Each Member of Congress and every American can help support the Department and its employees by simply acknowledging the good work that the employees do there every day. Whether we simply say thank you to a TSA agent or TSO officer the next time we pass through an airport or give an occasional speech on the Senate floor as I am doing tonight and have done on other occasions, our support makes a difference.

Mr. President, each September, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which we affectionately call FEMA, marks National Preparedness Month. Throughout the month, FEMA encourages all Americans to prepare for natural disasters and emergencies. To continue highlighting National Preparedness Month and to continue to highlight the important work done by FEMA and its people, I want to take a moment tonight to thank just a few of the employees of FEMA, one of the 22 component agencies all told that make up the Department of Homeland Security.

As my colleagues may know, just last month, historic flooding inundated much of the State of Louisiana. What some may not know is that even before the floodwaters had peaked, FEMA employees and personnel were on the ground there. They were setting up Incident Support Bases to provide supplies, coordinating with State and local officials, and supporting first respond-

ers in rescue efforts. FEMA also set up Disaster Recovery Centers to assist residents seeking Federal aid to get back on their feet in the aftermath of the storms.

One of the first FEMA employees on the ground there more than a month ago was Justo Hernandez, and Justo's picture is right here. Justo goes by the nickname Tito and is a Team Leader of the East II National Incident Management Assistance Team. With 28 years' experience with FEMA, Tito leads his team in immediate response efforts to natural and manmade disasters whenever and wherever they occur.

Ready at a moment's notice, Tito and his team are experts in disaster response, specializing in operations, logistics, planning, and recovery. They put their experience to use by supporting State and local officials as they work through the most trying of situations.

Members of Tito's team say that he is by far the best manager and supervisor they have ever worked for. As a leader, Tito leads by example, not afraid to get his hands dirty and never turning down a task, large or small. With their team expected to be deployed nearly 9 months out of the year, Tito has a deep respect for his team members' personal time.

When Tito does get some time back at home, I know he enjoys spending every moment with his wife and three children. His family is incredibly generous, and we are grateful to them for lending our Nation their husband and father so he may undertake this important work in many parts of America on behalf of all Americans.

As a FEMA employee, Tito embodies the spirit of dedication and caring, shaking hands with each individual he comes into contact with, asking them, "How are you doing?" As with most of the men and women at FEMA, Tito doesn't stop there. He does all he can do to help people.

Last month, I visited FEMA headquarters here in Washington, DC. I met a number of the thousands of dedicated employees who work there. This is a picture from FEMA. These are some of the exceptional people who help us in some of our darkest hours. While many of these men and women were not directly involved in the response effort in Louisiana, they felt obligated to do all they could for their colleagues who were on the ground in Louisiana or coordinating from around the country. In fact, FEMA headquarters established a backup call center in their offices, and dozens of FEMA employees volunteered—during or after their regular working hours—to man the phones and talk to people through some of the toughest situations imaginable.

One FEMA employee who asked how she could help is Melissa Forbes. Melissa has a Ph.D. in public policy and serves as Director of Enterprise Resource Planning in FEMA's Office of Policy and Program Analysis. Melissa's day job is to ensure that FEMA has the

resources needed for the challenges it expects to face in the months and years ahead.

For 27 hours over the course of 5 days—that is more than five hours each day—Melissa put her regular work on hold and came to the call center. In those 27 hours, Melissa took countless calls, answering questions and connecting people with her colleagues at FEMA who could get them immediate help.

In the Navy, when someone does a truly remarkable job, we say these words: “Bravo Zulu.” So, to Melissa and to all who worked and volunteered at FEMA headquarters, I would say a great big “Bravo Zulu.”

As I mentioned earlier, FEMA is made up of thousands of men and women who ask every day: How are you? How are you doing? How can we help? While Tito, his team, and others from FEMA were on the ground in Louisiana, Melissa felt compelled to do all she could do to support them.

More than a year ago, Secretary Johnson launched his Unity of Effort initiative to bring the Department of Homeland Security employees closer together in their shared mission. Last month, Melissa and Tito were reunited from a thousand miles away in their efforts to help the people of Louisiana.

Every month I come to the Senate floor and highlight the amazing dedication of two or three people, in some cases entire teams of men and women who are united in their shared goal of keeping Americans safe.

In closing, let me say that I don't think the results from this year's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey are a fluke. I believe the improvement in morale that has been reported by the thousands of employees at the Department of Homeland Security represents the growing unity within the Department of Homeland Security, the youngest and third largest Cabinet Department in the Federal Government.

I, for one, look forward to next year's viewpoint survey, as well as those in the years to come, because I believe they will continue to put on display an ever more united and effective department. So to Tito, to the East II team, to Melissa and the volunteers at FEMA headquarters, as well as to everyone at FEMA, we say a great big thank you. Thank you for coming together, not only by asking “How are you doing?” but by going to work to make things better for all of us. Keep up the great work that you are doing, and God bless you.

I have been joined on the floor by the majority leader.

Before I yield the floor, let me say to another person who has joined us, my colleague from New Hampshire, who is the ranking member Democrat on the Appropriations Subcommittee for Homeland Security that she and the chairman, former Governor HOEVEN, Senator HOEVEN now, do a wonderful job that is important to Homeland Security. On behalf of Melissa and Tito

and all the hundreds of thousands of people who work with them in Homeland Security, thank you for being there for them.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

#### THE CONVENTION ON THE LAW APPLICABLE TO CERTAIN RIGHTS IN RESPECT OF SECURITIES HELD WITH AN INTERMEDIARY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following treaties on today's Executive Calendar en bloc: Nos. 9 and 10; I further ask unanimous consent that the treaties be considered as having passed through their various parliamentary stages up to and including the presentation of the resolutions of ratification; that any committee conditions, declarations, or reservations be agreed to as applicable; that any statements be printed in the RECORD; further, that each treaty be voted on en bloc but considered voted on individually; that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table; that the President be notified of the Senate's action; and that following the disposition of the treaties, the Senate return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The treaties will be stated.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Treaty document No. 110-19, Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

Treaty document No. 112-6, The Convention on the Law Applicable to Certain Rights in Respect of Securities Held with an Intermediary.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for a division vote on the resolutions of ratification en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A division vote has been requested.

On treaty document No. 110-19, Senators in favor of the resolution of ratification will rise and stand until counted.

Those opposed will rise and stand until counted.

On a division vote, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to.

The resolution of ratification is as follows:

*Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),*

#### SECTION 1. SENATE ADVICE AND CONSENT SUBJECT TO AN UNDERSTANDING AND A DECLARATION.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the International Treaty on

Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on November 3, 2001, and signed by the United States of America on November 1, 2002 (the “Treaty”) (Treaty Doc. 110-19), subject to the understanding of section 2 and the declaration of section 3.

#### SEC. 2. UNDERSTANDING.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following understanding, which shall be included in the United States instrument of ratification: The United States of America understands that Article 12.3d shall not be construed in a manner that diminishes the availability or exercise of intellectual property rights under national laws.

#### SEC. 3. DECLARATION.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Treaty is not self-executing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On treaty document No. 112-6, Senators in favor of the resolution of ratification will rise and stand until counted.

Those opposed will rise and stand until counted.

On a division vote, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to.

The resolution of ratification is as follows:

*Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),*

#### SECTION 1. SENATE ADVICE AND CONSENT SUBJECT TO A DECLARATION.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention on the Law Applicable to Certain Rights in Respect of Securities Held with an Intermediary, done at The Hague on July 5, 2006, and signed by the United States on that same day (the “Convention”) (Treaty Doc. 112-6), subject to the declaration of section 2.

#### SEC. 2. DECLARATION.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Convention is self-executing.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 4511

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5 p.m., on Tuesday, November 15, the Rules Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4511 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; I further ask that there then be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the bill be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.